

From Lynch to Knight to Wood: An Inscribed Esmarch Chloroform Kit



The famous German surgeon Johannes Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908) described his namesake chloroform inhaler by 1877. The complete kit would eventually include a chloroform dropper bottle (center), the wireframe mask, gauze, minor tools, and a leather carrying case (left). This example has the flat hinged back of its case inscribed (right) with: "TO MY FRIEND / RALPH T. KNIGHT, M.D. / FROM / MATTHEW J. LYNCH, M.D. / MINNEAPOLIS / MINN." Eight years after serving as the 1953 president of the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Dr. Knight received the ASA's Distinguished Service Award. This Esmarch Chloroform Kit was passed from Dr. Lynch to Dr. Knight to the library-museum founded for the ASA by Dr. Paul Meyer Wood. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc.)

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